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10/609,183	06/26/2003	Christopher Forrest Harvey	694231/0043	7640

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EXAMINER

ALAM, UZMA

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2157

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

This action is responsive to the application filed on June 26, 2006. Claims 1-28 are pending. Claims 17, 18 and 28 are withdrawn from consideration because of a restriction requirement. Claims 1-16, 19-27 represent a method for facilitating communication between peer users.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121.
 - I. Claims 1-16, 19-27 are drawn to a method for facilitating communication between users, classified in class 709, subclasses 204.
 - II. Claims 17 and 18, drawn to a method for routing instant messages through a network , classified in class 709, subclass 238.
 - III. Claim 28 is drawn to a method for monitoring capacity on a server, classified in class 709, subclass 224.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from one another because of the following reasons:
Inventions II and I are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

3. A telephone call was made to applicant's representative, James DeCarlo to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement.

Applicant's representative elected group I of the above mentioned restriction requirement with traverse.

Examiner will address the claims of group I, claims 1-16 and 19-27 and will withdraw claims 17, 18 and 28 from consideration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-16 and 19-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Parker et al. US Patent No. 6, 677, 976. Parker teaches the invention as claimed including establishing a communication session between separate users (see abstract)

As per claim 1, Parker teaches a method for facilitating communication of an instant message and an image to a first user from a second user, the method comprising:

associating the first user with a first user ID (identifying a user by a user ID; column 4, lines 28-67; column 5, lines 1-10, column 5, lines 53-65; column 7, lines 56-67);

associating the instant message with the first user ID (sending the instant message to the correct user based on the user ID; column 4, lines 59-67; column 5, lines 1-10; column 5, lines 53-65);

associating the image with the first user ID (column 4, lines 59-67; column 5, lines 11-15; column 5, lines 53-65; column 7, lines 56-67);

causing the instant message to be communicated to the first user based on the first user ID (sending the instant message to the first user based on the user ID; column 4, lines 59-67; column 6, lines 13-30; column 7, lines 24-35); and

causing the image to be communicated to the first user based on the first user ID (linking the image with the user based on the user ID; column 4, lines 59-67; column 6, lines 13-30; column 7, lines 56-67);

wherein the first user is able to receive both the instant message and image from the second user (second user sending IM and images to the first user; column 4, lines 59-67; column 6, lines 13-30; column 6, lines 3-30; column 6, lines 55-67).

As per claims 9 and 19, Parker teaches a method for communicating images from a broadcaster computer to a first viewer computer, the method comprising and a method for passing by one or more application servers images from a broadcaster computer to a first viewer computer, the method comprising:

initiating one or more server connections between the broadcaster computer and the first viewer computer via one or more application servers, the connections for passing an image and

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an instant message (going through a central server and requesting a session; column 5, lines 1-15; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30; column 6, lines 55-67);

receiving an indication to establish a peer-to-peer connection between the broadcaster computer and the first viewer computer, the peer-to-peer connection for passing the image (the central server allows the user to have direct communication; column 5, lines 1-55; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30; column 7, lines 1-15); and

routing the image over the peer-to-peer connection instead of the server connections, thereby conserving bandwidth of the servers (sending all data across the direct connection; column 5, lines 1-15; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30).

As per claim 2, Parker teaches the method of claim 1, wherein the second user uses a broadcaster computer and the first user uses first viewer computer, the method further comprising:

receiving a request to initiate one or more server connections between the broadcaster computer and the first viewer computer, the connections for passing the image (going through a central server and requesting a session; column 5, lines 1-15; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30; column 6, lines 55-67);

facilitating a peer-to-peer connection between the broadcaster computer and the first viewer computer, the peer-to-peer connection for passing the image (the central server allows the user to have direct communication; column 5, lines 1-55; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30; column 7, lines 1-15); and

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facilitating communication of the image over the peer-to-peer connection instead of the server connections, thereby conserving bandwidth of the servers (sending all data across the direct connection; column 5, lines 1-15; column 5, lines 53-65; column 6, lines 3-30).

As per claim 3, Parker teaches the method of claim 2, further comprising: receiving control data for the image from the broadcaster computer (column 7, lines 24-35).

As per claims 4, 12 and 22 Parker teaches the method of claims 2, 11, and 19, wherein a third user uses a second viewer computer, further comprising, after passing the image from the broadcaster computer to the first viewer computer:

passing a request to view the image from a second viewer computer to the broadcaster computer (sending a request to a central computer to a user; column 6, lines 30-54; column 7, line 1-15; column 8, lines 31-67); and

facilitating the reestablishing of a first server connection between the broadcaster computer and the first server computer for passing the image in response to receiving the second viewer computer request (column 6, lines 30-54; column 7, line 1-15; column 8, lines 31-67); and

facilitating a second server connection between the broadcaster computer and the second viewer computer for passing the image, thereby permitting both the first viewer computer and the second viewer computer to receive the image (column 6, lines 30-54; column 7, line 1-15; column 8, lines 31-67).

As per claims 5, 13, and 23, Parker teaches the method of claims 4, 12 and 22, wherein the reestablishing is in response to the broadcaster computer receiving approval from the second user (column 6, lines 13-30; column 8, lines 1-15, lines 23-36).

As per claims 6, 14 and 24 Parker teaches the method of claims 5, 12 and 22, wherein the third user is on an approved list (column 6, lines 13-30; column 8, lines 1-15, lines 23-36).

As per claims 7, 15 and 25 Parker teaches the method of claims 4, 11 and 22, further comprising: maintaining the peer-to-peer connection during existence of the server connection to the second viewer computer; terminating the second server connection; and facilitating the passing of the image over the peer-to-peer connection in response to termination of the second server connection (maintaining a direct connection between two users; column 6, lines 55-67; column 7, lines 1-15; column 8, lines 37-52).

As per claims 8 and 26, Parker teaches the method of claims 1 and 25, further comprising: associating a second user ID with the second user; wherein causing the instant message to be communicated to the first user is further based on the second user ID (column 6, lines 30-54; column 8, lines 1-15, 23-36).

As per claim 10, Parker teaches the method of claim 9, wherein the server connections with the application servers are for passing control data for the image (sending packet header

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information; column 6, lines 31-54).

As per claims 11 and 16, Parker teaches the method of claims 10 and 15, wherein the server connections are further for passing an instant message (column 8, lines 1-15).

As per claim 20, Parker teaches the method of claim 19, further comprising: receiving control data for the image from the broadcaster computer (sending packet header information; column 8, lines 37-52)

As per claim 21, Parker teaches the method of claim 20, further comprising: passing an instant message from the broadcaster computer to the first viewer computer (column 8, lines 37-50).

As per claim 27, Parker teaches a method for communicating a series of images from a broadcaster computer to a first viewer computer via one or more application servers, the method comprising: passing a first image of the series of images from the broadcaster computer to the first viewer computer; and detecting whether an indication from the first viewer computer as to whether the first image has been received; and passing a second image of the series of images if the first image has been received (column 5, lines 1-15; column 6, lines 4-11; column 8, lines 53-65).

Conclusion


3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
4. Ball et al. US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0126135
5. Nelson et al. US Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0008635.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uzma Alam whose telephone number is (571) 272-3995. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Tuesday 5:30 AM - 2:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Uzma Alam
Ua
May 16, 2006


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